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M37
1995

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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Present: Mr. D. Bucsis (Chairman); Trustees Bishop, Johnstone and Mulholland; Mesdames Barr, Bramberger, Burns, Dalziel, Kappheim, Kerr Jaskiewicz, Oommen and Savelli; Messrs. Shields and Verticchio; and Dr. Van der Spuy.

Not Present: Trustee Patenaude; Mesdames Barnes, Simms-Obidi; and Dr. Newberry.

URBAN MUNICIPAL

Also Present: Trustees Johnston and Stewart.
P. Hutchinson, Hamilton Teachers' Federation

NOV 15 1995

Officials Present: E. Bond (Superintendent of Program Services)
Dr. J. Tomlinson (Project Team Leader - Special Education)

GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS

Mr. Bucsis called the meeting to order, noting regrets for not attending were received from Trustee Patenaude and Ms. Collins (Hamilton Principals' Association). He then called for confirmation of the minutes.

Moved by Mr. Mulholland:

That the minutes of the regular meeting of 1995 09 20 be approved as presented.
CARRIED

Chairman's Remarks
Mr. Bucsis drew the members' attention to the following items:

▪March, 1996 meeting date
As noted at the last meeting, the March meeting date falls within the March Break, it was agreed:

That the March, 1996 (1996 03 13) SEAC meeting be rescheduled to Wednesday, 1996 03 20 at 19:00 hours.

[Note: It has since been determined that 1996 03 20 (third Wednesday of the month) is the regular meeting date for SEAC and does not fall within the March Break. Members are reminded that the March, 1996 SEAC meeting will be held on Wednesday, 1996 03 20 at 19:00 hours.]

▪Association Presentations Sign-up Sheet
The Chairman briefly discussed the contents of the form and then requested members wishing to do a presentation about their respective organization to sign up accordingly.

▪Agenda Items
Mr. Bucsis encouraged the members to provide enough timelines for placing items for consideration on the SEAC agenda. Referring to the Organizational Update, the members agreed to continue placing this at the end of the Agenda in consideration of presentations to this Committee.

Remarks - Project Team Leader/Superintendent of Program Services
Dr. Tomlinson expressed regrets on behalf of the Special Education Consultants as they were attending the Annual Awards Dinner of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) at Michelangelo Banquet Centre.

Miss Bond announced that Wanda Lane, Principal of Robert Land School, would be receiving the CEC Educational Leader of the Year Award, with some Hamilton special needs students getting the "Yes I Can" awards.

As the Awards Dinner coincided with tonight's meeting, Miss Bond agreed to take this annual event into consideration in scheduling future SEAC meetings.

Miss Bond was pleased to advise that three Hamilton Board of Education schools (Hillcrest, George L. Armstrong and Queensdale Schools) and the Board's Augmentative Alternative Communication Team received Ministry of Education and Training Awards for Exemplary Practice in Integration.

At this point, noting a student in wheelchair in the audience had to bring his own ramp to enter the meeting room, the members concurred that SEAC should consider an accessible venue for future meetings. [Note: The ramp to the Lower Auditorium had to be removed for safety reasons.]

GENERAL

Presentation - Alternative/Augmentative Communication Team

Miss Bond provided a brief overview then called on the presentors: Mesdames D. Husack (Senior Speech and Language Pathologist), J. Tressel (Augmentative Communications Resource Teacher) and S. Troncho (Speech Pathologist). An information sheet on "Augmentative Alternative Communication Team (AACT) and its Development" and the "Augmentative Alternative Communication Team, AACT pamphlet were distributed during the presentation. [Copies of these handouts are on file in the Minute Room.]

It was agreed:

That the Presentation - Alternative/Augmentative Communication Team be received for information.

Transportation Report

Miss Bond introduced Ms. G. Christmas, Transportation Supervisor, who reviewed the Report. She drew the members' attention to the transportation initiatives implemented in September, 1995 and some revisions, since the last report, to the Regulations and Guidelines Pertaining to Drivers and Vehicles.

The members provided the following suggestions for review/consideration:

- updated driver's personal records (driving skills/qualifications, character background, police clearance, etc.)
- more extensive driver's training, particularly in the area of handling special needs students
- cost-effective ways of transporting special education students (e.g. use of public transit transportation, including these students in their neighbourhood schools, etc.)
- a review of the wording of the information on exceptionalities outlined in the Special Education Handbook for School Carriers

It was agreed:

That the 1995 Annual Transportation Report be received for information.

Report of the Special Education Advisory Committee [September meeting] - Referred Back at the 1995 10 10 Operations and Finance Committee Meeting

Mr. Bucsis requested and obtained the required two-thirds majority vote to consider this item.

Mrs. Bishop advised the members that the Report of the Special Education Advisory Committee (from the September meeting) was referred back for further evaluation at the 1995 10 10 Operations and Finance Committee meeting (excerpts of the minutes were

distributed to the members [see attached]). She added that the referral motion will be considered at the regular meeting of the Board tomorrow night.

In speaking on behalf of the Board, Mr. Stewart expressed the trustees' concerns with the recommendations outlined in the report, particularly the financial implications given the on-going budget restraint and limited resources of the Board. He emphasized that Board approval of these recommendations means approved policy which would lead to implementation. Mr. Stewart felt it would be more appropriate to receive the report for information and then the recommendations could be considered at a future time.

The members provided the following input:

- the recommendations are geared towards future/forward planning
- there is intent to develop collaboration between SEAC and the Board in "doing the best" within available resources
- these recommendations are intended to facilitate efficient and effective accommodation/ accessibility planning for special needs students
- formation of a small committee of SEAC members and trustees to review the recommendations in terms of wording and interpretation

At the point, Mr. Shields requested the minutes reflect his appreciation for the trustees' gesture of co-operation and willingness to clarify this issue tonight.

The members agreed to put this item on the November SEAC Agenda for further discussion.

Moved by Mrs. Oommen:

That this Committee continue to meet until 21:30 hours. **Lost**

Items Carried Over from September Agenda:

- Draft Regulation 305
- Draft Exceptionalities and Criteria

Dr. Tomlinson noted that a copy of the Board's submission to these Ministry of Education and Training's documents were attached to the June, 1995 SEAC Agenda.

- Short-Term Disability Motion (referred back)

Mrs. Bishop felt it would be helpful to survey the situation in the schools in order to determine the extent of concerns regarding this issue.

Moved by Mrs. Bishop:

That school principals be surveyed on the extent of concerns regarding the issue of Short-Term Disability Transportation and that the information be presented to the November, 1995 Special Education and Advisory Committee meeting. **CARRIED**

- Volunteers for the Preparation of the Special Education Annual Report

The following members volunteered to assist Dr. Tomlinson in the preparation of the next Special Education Annual Report: Trustee Bishop, Mesdames Dalziel, Kappheim and Mr. Shields.

Ministry of Education and Training Award for Exemplary Practices in Integration

See discussion under "Remarks - Project Team Leader/Superintendent of Program".

Organizational Update

Down Syndrome Association

Mrs. Oommen distributed a conference flyer on "Families for Social Value and Inclusion", a two-day workshop on 1995 11 10 to 11 at Redeemer College in Ancaster. [A copy of the flyer is on file in the Minute Room.]

Board Update

Mrs. Bishop reminded the members of the workshop on "Educational Opportunities for People with Disabilities in Hamilton-Wentworth" on Friday, 1995 10 27 at Briarwood School.

The meeting then adjourned.

Read and confirmed,

CHAIRMAN

rt

Att.

conflicts, confirmation that installation of boilers will meet Building/Safety Codes.

Mr. Stewart advised such a detailed request would require a motion. It was also pointed out that a previous motion from the 1995 06 15 Special Operations and Finance Committee meeting already provides for a report on the contract arrangement with Honeywell.

NEW BUSINESS:

Correspondence from the Peel Board of Education re increased federal support for ESL/ESD children - referred at 1995 09 21 Board

Mr. Shewfelt advised the intent is to have federal funding reflect the percentage of immigrants settling in Ontario.

Moved by Mrs. Bishop:

That the correspondence from the Peel Board of Education regarding increased federal support for ESL/ESD children be received for information and that the Board of Education for the City of Hamilton support their action. **Carried.**

Report of the Special Education Advisory Committee

Mrs. Bishop presented the report noting Items a) to g) were originally passed in a 1987 SEAC Accessibility Report and focus on planning and resources rather than monetary issues.

Moved by Mrs. Bishop:

That the Report of the Special Education Advisory Committee be approved.

While understanding the intent of the Report, some trustees were hesitant to approve recommendations that create expectations that cannot be fulfilled. Observations included:
- the Board does not have money for systematic upgrading of all schools
- possible further loss of funding
- the need for clarity in motions and elimination of words such as "long-term" and "consumers"
- is transportation cheaper?

Moved by Mr. Stewart

That the Report of the Special Education Advisory Committee be referred back to the Committee for further evaluation.

Speaking to the referral, concerns were expressed as follows:
- Chedoke-McMaster expertise draws children with special education needs to Hamilton
- the work and time expended by the committee on this report and possible misinterpretation of the referral

Mr. Mulholland hoped the recommendations would be dealt with independently.

In support of the recommendations, it was noted that:
- no timelines (long-term) are included in the recommendations
- recommendations do not say this **has to happen**, but what

should happen.
- basic statements of the direction we should try to follow.
- recommendations provide a framework for Human Rights' Legislation and proposed legislation for Integration of students in schools.
- the word "consumer" be replaced by "SEAC representative"

It was suggested that such reports should be handled differently, i.e. reviewed by officials first for input into costings, timelines, etc.

Mr. Goodridge acknowledged the difficulty of long-term planning without resources. Trustees' understanding of the implementation of this report would be paramount given that no timelines were delineated within the recommendations.

Mrs. Bishop reiterated the recommendations represent a moderate approach to planning. Timelines were omitted as SEAC is aware of the constraints faced by the Board.

Mr. Stewart noted that Board approval means approved policy which would effect its implementation and suggested that the words "and the following recommendations be approved" should be eliminated.

Mr. Mulholland assumed the Chair at Miss Cunningham's request.
Miss Cunningham commented her understanding that some of these recommendations should be happening but felt they must be incorporated into the priorities of the Board in a deficit situation. She was in agreement with the referral while recognizing the commitment of SEAC.

The motion was put to a vote and was **Carried.**

Miss Cunningham resumed the Chair.

When Mr. Gage suggested sending the report to Senior Management, Miss Cunningham noted Mr. Stewart's offer to explain members' concerns to SEAC.

ELEMENTARY/SECONDARY

BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES:

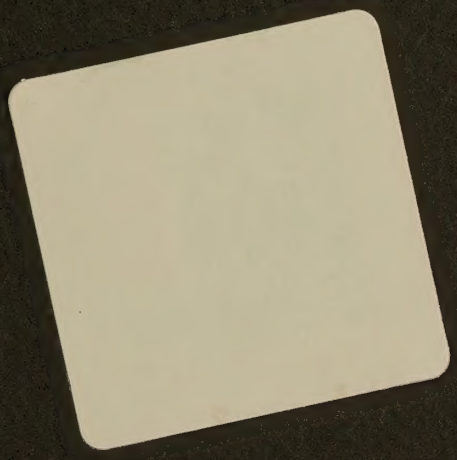
Report from the Working Group re Kindergarten Registration Procedures

Mr. Matier and Ms. Simpson, Project Team Leader - Early Years, presented the Report.

Moved by Ms. Orban:

That the Report re Kindergarten Registration Procedure be received for information.

Mr. Mulholland assumed the Chair to allow Miss Cunningham to voice her reluctance to approve a recommendation containing a $2,000 expenditure (page 8). She urged staff to prioritize within their own budgets before reports are brought to Board. Ms. Simpson and Ms. Brock-Woodland, Public Relations Officer, agreed to absorb this amount.



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